News Releases
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Newfoundland Labrador

Tourism, Culture and Recreation
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Minister Congratulates Arts Council Award Winners

The Honourable Clyde Jackman, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, today extended congratulations to the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council (NLAC) Arts Award winners, who were recognized at a gala celebration held Saturday, May 3, at the Reid Theatre in St. John's.

"These awards represent the outstanding achievements and contributions Newfoundland and Labrador artists and arts patrons make to the cultural life of this province," Minister Jackman said. "I extend sincere congratulations to all the winners and finalists, as well as to the organizers who worked hard to make the celebration a success."

Minister Jackman, along with Newfoundland and Labrador filmmaker Gerry Rogers, presented the 2007 Artist of the Year Award to novelist, playwright and actor Joel Hynes.

Mr. Hynes' first novel, *Down to the Dirt*, has gained much acclaim since its release in 2003. It won the Percy Janes First Novel Award, was nominated for the Dublin Literary IMPAC Award and was shortlisted for the Winterset Award and the Atlantic Book Awards. It has been developed into a feature film which will be shown as a part of this year's Cannes Film Festival in the Telefilm "Perspective Canada" screening series - a first for a Newfoundland and Labrador film. In 2007, he released his second novel, *Right Away Monday*, which is currently being developed into a stage play.

Other winners include: Dorrie Brown of Happy Valley-Goose Bay, who took home the Arts in Education Award; visual artist Mary Ann Penashue of Sheshatshiu, who won the Emerging Artist Award; Rabbittown Theatre, operated in St. John's by Neil and Aiden Flynn, which received the Patron of the Arts Award; Joan Clark of St. John's, who was presented with the Arts Achievement Award. Holyrood visual artist Gerry Squires, and the Newfoundland Writers' Guild, were the 2008 inductees into the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council Hall of Honour.

Minister Jackman noted the Provincial Government's continued commitment to the arts and cultural sectors through its $17.6M cultural strategy, *Creative Newfoundland and Labrador*.

"Budget 2008 provides an additional $300,000 to the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council," the minister said. "This fulfills the three-year commitment we made through our cultural strategy, to more than double financial support to the NLAC to $1.8 million annually."

In 2007-08, the NLAC provided $1,141,362 in grants to 278 artists and arts organizations (compared to $797,241 to 257 artists in 2006-07). Over the past two years, the NLAC has also provided $320,892 to schools throughout Newfoundland and Labrador through ArtsSmarts and the Visiting Artists Program.

Minister Jackman noted that Budget 2008 also provides $500,000 in new funding for Arts and Culture Centre infrastructure, and $100,000 for cultural research - including an additional $25,000 for further study into the Status of the Artist initiative, which is designed to improve the socio-economic lives of working artists.

Increased support provided annually to arts and cultural sector organizations since the advent of the cultural strategy continues in Budget 2008. Increases since 2006 include $100,000 to Music NL; $50,000 to the Publishers Assistance Program, and $50,000 to the Arts and Letters Program, to name a few.

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